

Presidential Coins



President Bob Knight presents IT Specialist Rick Bartz with a Presidential Coin at the 2014 State of the College address.

In 2007, Clark College President Bob Knight introduced a new honor at Clark College: the Presidential Coin.

The coin is given to faculty and staff members who provide exemplary service to Clark students, the college and the community. The honorees are decided by the president and are kept secret until the names are announced—generally on Opening Day in the fall or during the annual State of the College address.

Four Clark College employees received Presidential Coins during the State of the College address on January 16. They were:

Rick Bartz

In his 19 years as a media specialist at Clark, Rick Bartz has amassed extensive knowledge of the college and its programs, knowledge that allows him to provide a high level of service. He works part of his shift in the evening and is available to support evening events and faculty teaching night classes. Bartz has also been involved in the installation of the majority of smart classrooms across campus.

“He has an upbeat attitude that is frequently commented upon by the customers he supports,” said President Knight. “He is frequently called in to do last-minute setups which he does without complaint.”

Mike Godson

Automotive Technology professor Mike Godson has already earned many awards in his field. In 2009, he scored the highest out of nearly 15,000 people on the national L1 (advanced engine performance) exam, earning him L1 Master Technician of the Year award from Automotive Service Excellence and Motor Age Training. He was also chosen to present in the Faculty Speaker Series in 2012. Beginning 2012 and continuing today, he led the department in the curriculum development and program transition to a “stand-alone” T-TEN program. He has also held a leadership role at the national level with Toyota for over a decade.

Mirranda Saari

Beginning as a Program Coordinator 10 years ago, Mirranda Saari has received a number of promotions for her outstanding performance, including to her current role is Associate Director of Admissions and Assessment. She has played a lead role on several key projects: our Lean initiative in student affairs, strengthening community partnerships, and our fall enrollment initiatives. She also represents Clark as a subject matter expert in our PeopleSoft (ctcLink) conversion.

“She strives to improve efficiencies and deliver the best in

customer service to our students,” said President Knight in presenting the coin. “She has earned the respect and of her staff through listening and advocacy, she has a strong work ethic and a positive attitude.”

Jenny Shadley

Working in the Office of Communications and Marketing for more than six years, Graphic Designer/Photographer Jenny Shadley has become a familiar face around the college as she photographs special events, takes portraits of employees and students, and works with different departments to provide high-quality graphic design to support their programs and events.

“She is always willing to jump in and help, whether it as an Art Committee member or managing social media,” said President Knight. “She has a consistently positive attitude, thinking of the best ways to promote the Penguin Nation and help others look good.”

Phoenix Flies High



The staff of the 2013 *Phoenix* posing during the journal's unveiling in spring. Art professor Kathrena Halsinger, *far right*, is their advisor.

Congratulations to the staff of *Phoenix*. Clark's literary and art journal just won third place in the Western-Pacific division of the Community College Humanities Association's 2013 Literary Magazine Competition.

"I think the quality of *Phoenix* is a reflection of the quality of the strong arts program that the college, and the greater community, continue to support," says art professor and *Phoenix* advisor Kathrena Halsinger. "The arts are the stuff of life and therefore are relevant to all. We really work hard to be inclusive and get people across campus to be involved. We've also been fortunate to be supported by our departments and the ASCC to keep the program strong."

Finding the Right Path



Katie Brown '98, who was named Washington state's 2014 Teacher of the Year, displaying her pride in Shuksan Middle School, where she has taught for 11 years.

Clark College '98 alumna Katie Day Brown was named Washington state's 2014 Teacher of the Year in an awards ceremony held on September 23 in Seattle.

Brown (whose last name was Day when she attended Clark) says that Clark was a crucial part of her educational journey. A graduate of Fort Vancouver High School, she began college at the University of the Redlands in California but realized that it wasn't the right fit for her. However, her intended transfer destination—Western Washington University—wouldn't

accept her out-of-state credits.

“So I went back home and thought of Clark,” she says. “They immediately said, ‘OK, we can work with you.’ They got my credits to transfer and I was able to start as a sophomore. I don’t really know what decision I would have made if Clark hadn’t worked with me. It really helped me continue my education without any interruption.”

Brown adds that Clark was where she took her first anthropology class. “It was one of my favorite classes,” she says. “That’s what sparked my interest in anthropology.”

Indeed, after receiving her associate degree with honors from Clark in 1998, Brown went on to earn a bachelor’s degree from WWU in anthropology in 2000. Originally, she didn’t plan on becoming a teacher, but found herself drawn to the profession after what she calls a “series of aha moments”: volunteering at a high poverty school in college, playing soccer with kids while studying in Costa Rica, and listening to Alaskan tribal elders teach young people about their history as an AmeriCorps volunteer. She returned to WWU to earn a teaching certificate in 2003 and then earned her master’s degree in education from Seattle Pacific University in 2009.

Brown now serves as the English Learner Learner specialist at Shuksan Middle School in Bellingham, Washington, where she has earned praise for her ability to collaborate with her colleagues to respect diversity and serve students who may be experiencing language barriers.

As Washington state’s Teacher of the Year, Brown will serve as an ambassador for the teaching profession in 2013-14 while continuing her work at Shuksan. She also will be considered for national Teacher of the Year, which is awarded by the Council of Chief State School Officers. President Obama will announce the winner in a special ceremony at the White House in the spring.

Brown says that she remains a strong advocate for community colleges. "Here at Shuksan, whenever we talk about college, I make sure to include community college in the conversation," she says. "It can be a really great option for the right student."

Photo courtesy of Katie Day Brown